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Bangalore Mirror ON SATURDAY

TEMP Max 31 | Min 22 | Humidity 63% Light rain Sensex 75,157 | Nifty 22,828 | Gold 93,641 | Silver 94,519 | Dollar 86.20 | Euro 97.73 | GBP 112.52

BBMP is yet to release funds since October 2024 not only for salary for marshals deployed at Bellandur, Varthur lakes, but also for repair of defunct vehicles

WHEN IS PAYDAY?

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The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) deployed 22 marshals each at Bellandur and Varthur Lakes in 2019. All these years, each marshal was being paid Rs 25,000 per month and their presence at these water bodies was a great help. They have rescued some people from being drowned in the lakes and prevented land mafia from encroaching on the water bodies.

Now, the number of marshals has come down to seven at each lake due to shortage of funds. The BBMP had deployed 36 marshals, six drivers and two supervisors at Bellandur and Varthur Lakes. They have to work round the clock in three shifts (six marshals and one driver in each shift) to keep a vigil on the water bodies. Now, the number of

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10 »

NO HUNGER GAMES

PAGE 6

Greatness lies within
THE MS DHONI
SIGNATURE EDITION
WHEN HOW YOU WALK THE PATH BECOMES A SERIES OF TRIUMPHS, IT'S RARE. IT'S PLATINUM.
Greatness arises from the ability to make every step a victory, mastering your craft with each challenge. This journey mirrors the enduring quality of platinum, a metal prized for its resilience, one that is truly rare. Featuring MS Dhoni's iconic signature, pieces from this platinum collection serve as a reminder that true success often lies in the journey itself.
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THINGS TO DO

01 Theatrical spectacle

The Ennui Collective is presenting 'Thus Spake Shoorpanakha, So Said Shakuni', which entails stories of power, ambition, and revenge spanning history and myth.
Where: Jagriti Theatre, Whitefield;
When: April 13, 3.30 pm and 7.30 pm

02 Canvas carnival

Artisera is presenting 'KARTAB', Gurmeet Marwah's first-ever solo exhibition, featuring paintings, woodcuts, and sculptures. Through his artworks, Gurmeet compels viewers to pause, reflect, and question the unseen forces at play in their existence..

Where: Artisera, Indiranagar;
When: April 12 to May 4

03 Crafty finds

Hi Life Exhibitions is bringing luxurious fashion, exquisite jewellery, and elegant home décor all under one roof. From elegant ensembles to trendsetting accessories, experience a world of creativity and craftsmanship.
Where: The Lalit Ashok, Seshadripuram;
When: April 11, 12,13, 10 am to 8 pm

04 Jazzed up

Windmills is presenting an exhilarating performance by Quadro Nuevo, Germany's most adventurous jazz ensemble
Where: Windmills, Hebbal;
When: April 11 and 12, 9.30 pm

05 Book discussion

BIC is organising a conversation on 'Heart Lamp: Selected Stories', where author Banu Mushtaq will delve into fearless storytelling and her portrayal of women navigating faith, family, and societal expectations in southern India.
Where: Bangalore International Centre, Domlur;
When: April 20, 6 pm

Price hike has killed the high for state's beer lovers

Due to higher prices, consumers are shifting towards cheaper beer brands or are reducing their beer consumption altogether, significantly affecting sales

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This decline has affected retail liquor stores and bars/restaurants, leading to a notable drop in beer purchase indents placed with the Karnataka State Beverages Corporation Limited (KSBCL)

The Karnataka government's decision to hike beer prices has backfired, with tipplers across the state turning their backs on the bubbly beverage. A sharp drop in beer sales has been recorded despite the summer season, typically a peak time for beer consumption.

While warmer months usually see a surge in beer sales, this year the mood amongst consumers has turned frosty. Disgruntled over the steep price hike, many have shifted to more affordable options, particularly Indian Made Liquor (IML), leaving premium beer brands to gather dust on the shelves.

Government's move hits the market

Sources said that in a bid to meet its excise revenue targets, the state had earlier increased the Additional Excise Duty (AED) on beer, which took effect from January 20. This resulted in beer prices rising by Rs 10 to Rs 50 per bottle, depending on the brand and alcohol content. Despite this measure being aimed at boosting state revenues, it seems to have hurt the beer trade significantly. From January to March this year, beer sales have consistently dipped, as per data shared by industry insiders.

A shift to cheaper booze

With higher prices pinching their pockets, consumers have shifted towards cheaper beer brands or reduced their consumption altogether. Many who once preferred premium brands are now opting for standard or economy options. As a result, demand for low-cost beers has seen a rise, while premium brands are witnessing sluggish sales.

Beer sales (between January and April)

2024: 1024.30 lakh litres

2025: 836 lakh litres

IML sales remain stable

Interestingly, the sale of Indian Made Liquor (IML) has not shown much fluctuation. From January 1 to April 7 last year, 1,580 lakh litres were sold, compared to 1,660 lakh litres this year, an increase of 80 lakh litres. While beer sales declined, the state's excise coffers have not suffered due to the AED hike.

Drop in beer sales

In the same January 1 to April 7 period last year, Karnataka sold 1,024.30 lakh litres (131.41 lakh cases) of beer. This year, it has dropped to 836 lakh litres (107.23 lakh cases), a significant fall of 188 lakh litres.

Low sales affects vendors

This decline has affected both retail liquor stores and bars/restaurants, leading to a notable drop in beer purchase indents placed with the Karnataka State Beverages Corporation Limited (KSBCL). "The summer months are generally profitable for beer trade, but this year sales have been falling consistently. The AED hike is clearly the main reason behind this slump," noted sources in the excise department.

Increase in Additional Excise Duty (AED) on beer, which took effect from January 20, resulted in beer prices rising by Rs 10 to Rs 50 per bottle, depending on the brand and alcohol content

Water price hike sparks outrage

The Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board's (BWSSB) recent water tariff hike has triggered strong opposition from citizens, commercial sectors, and industry bodies. Already reeling from rising living costs, residents are outraged by the added burden of increased water bills. BWSSB has defended the move as necessary to curb losses, improve water management, and encourage conservation. However, critics believe that the decision overlooks the financial pressures faced by the common man.

"While elected representatives enjoy pay hikes and allowances, the common people are forced to pay more for basic needs," said Ketan P, a resident of Balepet. Prateeksha, a resident of Nandini Layout opined that increasing water tariffs hurt low and middle-income families the most.

"Before hiking rates, BWSSB should have improved its own services. Even now, industrial areas do not get regular water supply," said Shivakumar, President of the Peenya Industrial Association. MG Rajagopal, President of Karnataka Small Scale Industries Association, stated that following diesel, electricity, and stamp duty hikes, the water tariff increase delivers a final blow, further burdening small industries instead of supporting

Private school education to be costlier

With admissions underway for the 2025-26 academic year, many private unaided schools across Karnataka have increased their admission fees by 15 to 20 percent, citing rising operational costs. This hike has added financial pressure on parents, who are now paying significantly more than last year. Private school associations claim the fee hike is unavoidable due to rising expenses such as staff salaries, diesel prices, insurance premiums, waste management charges, and water bills, all charged at commercial rates by the government.

"Every year, schools face increased costs for maintenance, salaries, and utilities. In response, we have increased our fees by around 15%," said D Shashikumar, General Secretary of Associated Managements of Primary and Secondary Schools in Karnataka (KAMS). He also clarified that schools may raise fees by 10–15%, based on their discretion and requirements. However, if a school imposes an unreasonable burden on parents, the Education Department can intervene and take legal action. A few school managements argue that declining enrollment due to the rising number of schools and government policies has forced them to raise fees to cover per-student operational costs. "This steep fee hike feels like a betrayal. We plan our budgets months in advance, and now we're being forced to rethink everything just to keep our children in the same school," said Priya Ramesh, a concerned parent. **-BMB**

Private school associations claim the fee hike is unavoidable due to rising expenses

Cyber criminals create fake FB account in Commissioner's name

A fake Facebook account was created using the photograph of Bengaluru City Police Commissioner B Dayanand in an attempt to collect money. The impersonators sent friend requests to contacts from the Commissioner's genuine profile and followed it up with messages soliciting money.

"Cyber thieves opened a fake account in the name of B Dayanand and sent friend requests to his relatives, police officers and members of the public. Accounts opened in Hindi language and requests should not be accepted. Fraudsters may steal personal information or demand money," police said. The scam flopped, as people were skeptical of direct money requests from a top police official. The incident has raised concerns about the increasing brazenness of cyber fraudsters. **BMB**

Man kills 82-year-old mother for refusing money for alcohol

A 52-year-old man allegedly murdered his elderly mother for refusing to give him money to buy alcohol. The incident took place in Muneshwara Nagar, Bagalgunte, on Thursday afternoon.

The accused, Mahendra Singh, who had been living with his mother, Shantabai (82), for the past five years, was a habitual alcoholic with no stable source of income. According to police, he regularly harassed his mother for money, which she received as a monthly pension after her husband, a government employee, passed away.

On Thursday around 1.30 pm, a heated argument broke out when Shantabai once again refused to give Mahendra money. In a fit of rage, he picked up an iron rod and struck her on the head, killing her on the spot. **BMB**

Migrant worker walking home murdered

Two people arrested in a murder case of a 24-year-old migrant labourer from Bihar, identified as Vikas, who was murdered after being kidnapped while walking home from work in an attempt to save Rs 15 in auto fare. The incident occurred on April 6 under Peenya police station limits.

Peenya police arrested two suspects identified as Santosh Kumar aka Budi (19), residing in Badarahalli and a second accused who is minor, while a third accused remains at large. The motive is believed to be robbery, though further interrogation is underway.

Vikas, who resided in Kadabagere, was returning home from a construction site in Andrahalli. Choosing to walk nearly 3 km from NICE Road to save money, he was intercepted near Chikkagollarahatti by two assailants. The men, posing as helpers, allegedly kidnapped him in an auto rickshaw before attacking him. **BMB**

Drugs, just a click away

As peddlers turn to social media and other online platforms to connect to customers, police tighten crackdown

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In a disturbing trend, drug peddlers are increasingly turning to online platforms like WhatsApp and social media to connect with customers, particularly targeting college students and young citizens. The Central Crime Branch (CCB) Narcotics Squad, acting on a tip-off, busted one such racket operating in the Electronic City area on April 7.

Around 11 am, the CCB received credible intelligence indicating the sale of hydro Ganja, a banned substance, being distributed through digital networks.

Two individuals, identified as Prasad and Ashwin Samuel, both hailing from Kerala, were caught allegedly coordinating their illicit trade via encrypted messaging apps.

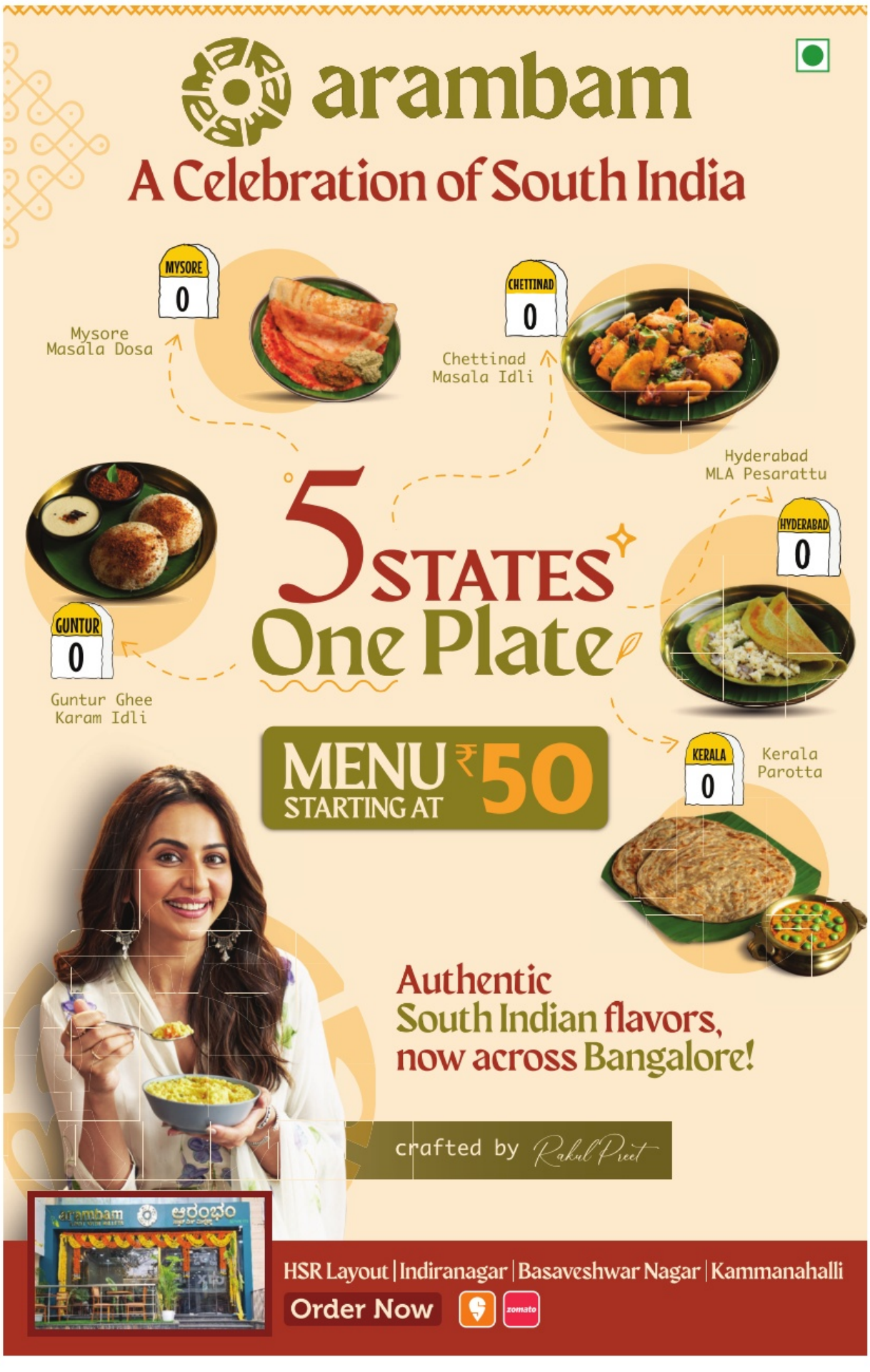
Preliminary investigations revealed that the accused procured the contraband from locations such as Bhimsandra and managed the entire distribution chain online. Payments were collected digitally, and deliveries were made discreetly in and around the Electronic City region.

A formal complaint has been registered, and further investigation is ongoing under the supervision of senior CCB officials. Police are also exploring whether the duo was part of a larger network using similar digital tactics to evade detection.

40 cases reported last month

In a continued effort to curb drug-related activities, City Police registered 40 cases under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act in March. A total of 47 individuals, including two foreign nationals, were arrested in connection with these cases.

The police seized significant quantities of narcotics, including 90.361 kilograms of ganja, 3.044 kilograms of hashish oil, 2 grams of cocaine, 1.254 kilograms of MDMA, and 27 grams of amphetamine.



Pedestrians at high risk on HAL Airport Road footpaths

Broken pavers, two-wheelers parked on footpaths, and lack of upkeep draw citizen ire

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The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) spent a lot of money on asphalting and development of footpaths on HAL Airport Road which is supposed to be a signal-free corridor. However, footpaths on the signal-free corridor road crave for immediate attention of the authorities concerned. Unwary pedestrians are vulnerable to tripping and hospitalisation due to uneven footpaths on this road.

Poornima Shetty, a resident of Rustam Bagh Layout, says the footpaths on both sides of HAL Airport Road between Domlur and Rustam Bagh urgently need attention. "I walked from Domlur to Rustam Bagh a few days ago and found several paver blocks either missing or broken along the way. It's unsafe for pedestrians, especially at night. I urge the authorities to make these footpaths truly pedestrian-friendly," she said.

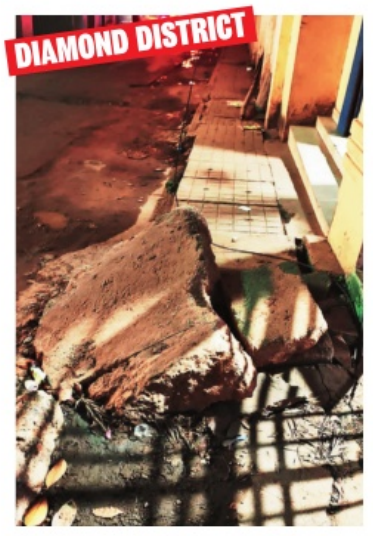
Vinod Jacob of Namma Bengaluru Foundation stressed that the poor condition of footpaths across the city highlights the urgent need for practical, sustainable designs over vanity-driven aesthetics. "Instead of focusing on visually appealing structures, footpaths should prioritise strong, durable construction to ensure safety and walkability for all—especially children and senior citizens, who are most vulnerable to accidents. Frequent falls and fractures caused by poor-quality footpaths underscore the importance of sturdy, well-designed infrastructure. Let's focus on maintaining and upgrading what we have before launching new projects, if we truly want to build a 'Brand Bengaluru' that puts safety and functionality first," he said.

The condition of the footpath near Diamond District

> **"Frequent falls and fractures caused by poor-quality footpaths underscore the importance of sturdy, well-designed infrastructure."** –Vinod Jacob, Namma Bengaluru Foundation

He said that two-wheelers on footpaths pose serious risks to pedestrians. "Installing bollards at footpath entry points on Old Airport Road can prevent this and ensure pedestrian safety. Two-wheelers on footpaths pose serious risks; installing bollards at footpath entry points on Old Airport Road can prevent this and ensure pedestrian safety," he said.

Coming down heavily on BBMP for neglecting footpath maintenance, Manjunath S, a resident of Murugeshpalya, said the footpaths are in poor condition and need urgent repairs before the onset of the monsoon. "While the road is in good shape, the footpaths are not. In some stretches, the footpath surface is level with the road, encouraging two-wheeler riders to use them, which causes serious inconvenience to pedestrians," he said.



NICE project under review: 374 land dispute cases prompt govt action

Cabinet moves to fix long-standing legal mess as NICE corridor faces delays and disputed land allotments

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has been authorised to form a cabinet sub-committee to review the functioning of NICE (Nandi Infrastructure Corridor Enterprises), which is implementing the Bengaluru-Mysuru Infrastructure Corridor Project. The decision, aimed at addressing project delays and legal complexities, was taken during Friday's cabinet meeting, Law and Tourism Minister HK Patil told the media.

Flyover construction slows down city traffic

Highlighting mounting concerns over delays, Patil said the subcommittee would help the cabinet take informed decisions by offering appropriate recommendations. He noted that 374 land dispute cases related to the project are pending in various courts—189 in civil courts, 164 in the High Court, and 21 in the Supreme Court. As per the Framework Agreement, NICE was to be allotted 13,237 acres of private land and 6,956 acres of government land, totalling 20,193 acres. However, without cabinet approval, KIADB entered into a separate agreement in 1998–99 to acquire 29,313 acres, contributing to the ongoing legal complications.

Under the BMIC project, 25,616 acres have been declared industrial area under the KIADB Act. Preliminary notification has been issued for 18,058 acres of private land, and final notification for 4,809 acres, while 13,249 acres remain without final notification. Courts have awarded 316 crore in compensation for 2,268 acres. So far, NICE has received 2,191 acres of private land and 5,000 acres of government land. Additionally, 1,699 acres—of which 2 acres are government land—have been transferred through registered sale deeds by KIADB in favour of NICE.

4,000 e-buses for Karnataka

The Cabinet has approved a proposal to procure 4,000 electric buses for BMTC, KSRTC, and NWKRTC under the "Karnataka Electric Bus Program" with World Bank support. A Preliminary Project Report (PPR) has been submitted to the Centre via the DEA portal, proposing a 3,000 crore low-interest loan to boost eco-friendly public transport.

whatsapp MIRROR 9591233247

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Send us a picture along with specific details. And please, no phone calls or spamming

Repair urgency
Metro Station

Most platform chairs at MG Road Metro Station are in poor condition and need urgent repairs.

Waste woes
Indiranagar

Garbage has been accumulating on 14th 'A' Cross, Indiranagar (Ward 72), causing inconvenience.

Commuter concern
Yeshwanthpur

The bus stop seat near a factory, opposite big bazaar, has sharp edges that could injure commuters or tear clothing.

Citizens' appeal for pet park denied

Establishing pet parks are impractical, associations should create clear guidelines for use, ensuring fair access, says BBMP official

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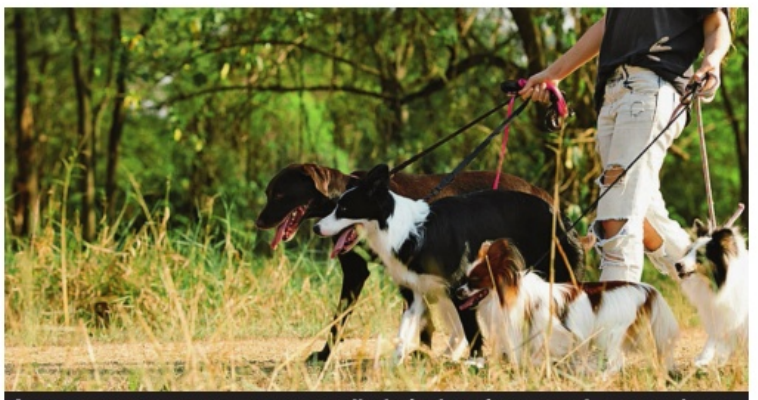
A group of residents from across the city came together to urge the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) to set up a dedicated pet park, citing frequent complaints, unclear rules, and rising tensions between pet owners and other park users. However, BBMP officials declined the proposal, stating that such an idea was not feasible.



At present, most pet parents walk their dogs in general-use parks or on pavements, often attracting frowns or confrontations

At present, most pet parents walk their dogs in general-use parks or on pavements, often attracting frowns or confrontations from those who do not own pets. The situation, many say, has reached a tipping point. "We've had multiple arguments break out over pets being unleashed, and it's honestly just stressful," said a resident from Jayanagar. The resident clarified that they were not against dogs but emphasized the need for clearer spaces where everyone can coexist peacefully.

Pet owners echo the frustration. "Some parks have vague rules whereas some ban pets altogether. As a responsible dog owner, I pick up after my pet, I keep him leashed but still I'm treated like a rule-breaker," said Priyanka Desai, a pet owner.

The demand for pet parks is not a recent development, but residents are now prioritising it after a recent petition garnered over 500 signatures within just four days. The petition urges BBMP to convert an underused civic space near the 24th Main Road into a pet-friendly park, complete with agility training zones, water stations, and waste bins.

Suralkar Vikas Kishore, BBMP Special Commissioner, Health and Animal Husbandry, expressed that the idea of a pet park may be impractical, as it cannot be exclusively designated for pets. Additionally, he mentioned that establishing multiple pet parks is not feasible due to the scattered distribution of pet owners across the BBMP limits. "Instead, what can be done is that these associations, and even our parks whether BBMP's or private, should have clear guidelines. If there are any violations, they should inform BBMP and action will be taken," he said.

Despite this, pet owners and local associations remain hopeful. "People think pet parks are just for leisure, but it's actually about safety and mental health for both humans and animals," said Rahul Kotian, co-founder of the Pet Owners' Welfare Association. He pointed out that several Indian cities, including Pune and Hyderabad, have already adopted pet-friendly zones.

> **People think pet parks are just for leisure, but it's actually about safety and mental health for both humans and animals**
>
> –Rahul Kotian, co-founder of the Pet Owners' Welfare Association

Interestingly, even non-pet owners are voicing support. A resident shared that they used to be annoyed by dogs in the walking area, but now they understand that it is not entirely the owners' fault, as there is simply no space for them. "If the city can build cycling tracks, why not a small pet park?" the resident said.

ELCIA companies unite for eco-friendly mobility ideas

Under collaborative initiative, companies aim to propose ideas to encourage commuters to shift from personal vehicles to public transport

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Over the next three months, startups, technology firms, and industries in Electronic City will be busy brainstorming ways to make public transport an attractive option for their employees.

The companies will come up with ideas for scalable mobility solutions that would encourage metro usage in Electronic City. The proposed solutions would also incorporate incentives for eco-friendly transport choices by employees, and will come up with ideas that can encourage shared mobility and behaviour-driven solutions to enhance last-mile access, affordability, safety, and convenience of public transport in the area to meet commuter needs.

Nearly 25 member companies of Electronics City Industries Association (ELCIA) will be participating in a three-month-long challenge that will help enhance public transport for commuters in Electronic City.

The initiative 'STAMP: Nudging Commuter Behaviour', by the Bengaluru Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL), Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC), and ELCIA, in collaboration with Toyota Mobility Foundation (TMF) and World Resources Institute (WRI), is expected to encourage commuters to shift from personal vehicles to public transport.

The best idea will fetch its team a grant of USD 100,000 to further develop and pilot their solutions. The challenge will also include a bootcamp with Ashoka University's Centre for Social and Behaviour Change, offering behavioural science insights.

Srinivas Alavalli, Fellow, Integrated Transport and Road Safety, WRI India, noted that finalists will receive support in business development and strategy, pilot design, and government engagement tools, amongst other technical support. They will also be connected to a wide network of domain experts, as well as government and local authority representatives for feedback and advice. "Shortlisted enterprises will be awarded prize money for further development and piloting the innovation technology idea, product, or services, followed by selection of the best idea," he said.

The initiative aims to inspire organizations to develop innovative solutions and address challenges uniquely aligned with their specific requirements.

A spokesperson of Electronics City Industries Association (ELCIA) said that Electronic City has long been at the forefront of innovation, and improving mobility is a key part of the organisation's vision for a more sustainable and efficient urban ecosystem. "By leveraging behavioural science and technology, the initiative will help identify gaps in mobility infrastructure and user patterns, democratise public transport, enhance utilisation by commuters, and reduce congestion to improve last-mile connectivity for thousands of ELCIA's members' employees and residents around Electronic City," the spokesperson said.

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Venue: La Marvella, South End Circle, 2nd Block, Jayanagar, Bangalore-560011

Stunted, underweight: Poor nutrition blow to K'taka kids

State 9th in country on stunting, 10th for underweight kids

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Karnataka has recorded alarming child malnutrition rates, placing it among the worst-affected states in India, according to the latest Poshan Tracker data for February 2025. The state ranks 9th highest in stunting (41.2%), a key indicator of chronic malnutrition, and 10th highest for underweight children (17.61%), reflecting serious concerns over child health and nutrition.

The data, presented by Union Minister of State for Women and Child Development Savitri Thakur in the Rajya Sabha, paints a worrying picture of child nutrition in Karnataka. Although the state fares better than some northern and central states like Bihar (47.33%), Uttar Pradesh (48.72%), and Madhya Pradesh (46.6%) in terms of stunting, its figures are significantly higher than those of neighbouring states such as Tamil Nadu (13.76%) and Andhra Pradesh (18.27%) highlighting persistent nutritional deficiencies among children aged 0-5 years.

Karnataka's stunting rate (41.2%) is disturbingly close to that of states like Jharkhand (43.91%), Maharashtra (44.45%), and Delhi (42.9%), all of which continue to battle chronic malnutrition. While the state reports a relatively low wasting rate of 3.68% below the national average of 5.35% the high stunting and underweight rates suggest that chronic malnutrition remains a persistent issue. Similarly, the underweight percentage (17.61%) places Karnataka among the top 10 states struggling with child nutrition, indicating both chronic and acute deficiencies in early childhood development.

Poor maternal health, sanitation gaps, and weak rural services fuel K'taka's chronic child malnutrition crisis

"Nutrition is more than just eating; it depends on digestion, absorption, and metabolism, influenced by sanitation, education, and safe drinking water
–Union Minister Savitri Thakur

Experts attribute the concerning figures to a mix of factors, including food insecurity, poor maternal health, limited access to quality healthcare in rural areas, and inadequate sanitation. Despite government nutrition programmes like the Ksheera Bhagya Scheme, which provides milk to school children, and the Poshan Abhiyan, gaps in implementation especially in rural and tribal areas continue to hamper progress.

Malnutrition among children aged 0–5 years is further exacerbated by poor maternal nutrition, low birth weights, and lack of access to fortified foods and nutritional supplements. Hygiene and sanitation challenges also contribute to poor digestion and absorption of nutrients, compounding the issue.

To tackle the crisis, experts stress the need to strengthen the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) to ensure Anganwadi centres reach the most vulnerable children. There is also a growing call to expand maternal health programmes, improve access to clean drinking water, and promote diet diversity through locally available nutritious food.

Highlighting the government's approach, Savitri Thakur stated, "Nutrition is more than just eating; it depends on digestion, absorption, and metabolism, influenced by sanitation, education, and safe drinking water." She emphasised the importance of a multi-sectoral strategy involving food, health, water, sanitation, and education. Mission Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0 are central to this effort, aiming to treat moderate and severe acute malnutrition while promoting fortified rice, millet-based meals, and diet diversity to combat anaemia and malnutrition.

Summer special trains announced

To manage the summer rush, South Western Railway will operate one-time special trains between Belagavi–SMVT Bengaluru and SMVT Bengaluru–Ernakulam. Train No. 07373 will depart Belagavi at 4.00 am. on April 12 and reach SMVT Bengaluru by 3.30 pm the same day. The return service, Train No. 07374, will leave SMVT Bengaluru at 12:00 noon on April 15 and arrive in Belagavi by 11:30 pm.

Train No. 06575 from SMVT Bengaluru to Ernakulam will leave at 4:35 p.m. on April 12 and reach at 3am on April 13. The return service, Train No. 06576, will depart Ernakulam at 10.00 pm on April 14 and reach SMVT Bengaluru by 10.55 am on April 15.

Each train will have 16 coaches. Passengers are advised to check the official railway website or nearby counters for bookings. **–BMB**

Uniform quality checks mandated

With school uniform supply for 2025–26 underway, the Department of School Education has mandated strict quality checks. Samples must be collected within a week of delivery to ensure fabric standards, following last year's complaints against KHDC. A central committee will oversee quality assurance.

A Rs 155 crore tender has been awarded to KHDC and three private firms to supply 236 lakh meters of fabric by the end of May, covering 44 lakh students from Classes 1 to 10 in government schools. District officials have been instructed to collect six random samples per taluk shirt, pant, skirt, salwar top, bottom, and dupatta from actual stock. These must be sealed with the supplier's name and sent to the Director of Primary Education. **–BMB**

Spurious fever rituals turn deadly

In a disturbing revelation, cases have emerged from parts of Koppal district where children suffering from fever are being subjected to harmful superstitious rituals, leaving their fragile bodies scorched.

A deeply rooted belief in some rural communities holds that burning certain parts of a child's body with a heated incense stick can cure fever. In a tragic incident on December 4, 2024, a seven-month-old infant from Vittalapur village in Kanakagiri taluk died after undergoing this ritual.

Following the infant's death, 18 more similar cases have surfaced, sparking public outrage. The district administration has begun taking action. "Burning the body does not reduce fever; it worsens the child's condition. **–BMB**

SWR to deploy home guards, strenghthen rail security

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In a move to enhance passenger safety, the South Western Railway (SWR) is set to bolster its security presence by hiring Karnataka Home Guards (KHGs), addressing a 30% shortage in Railway Protection Force (RPF) personnel.

This development comes amid rising concerns over passenger safety and increasing incidents of late-night disturbances and public nuisance, including the loud use of mobile phones at stations and on trains.

SWR currently operates with a sanctioned RPF strength of 1,577 personnel, but only about 1,100 are actively serving, leaving nearly 500 posts vacant. To bridge this gap and ensure better security coverage especially at station premises the department has proposed hiring 338 KHGs as a temporary yet strategic measure. Their deployment is expected to significantly improve static security and allow existing RPF personnel to concentrate on high-priority mobile duties, thereby ensuring a safer and more comfortable travel experience for passengers.

Due to the shortfall, RPF personnel are currently being stretched thin, with many of them deployed to critical tasks such as escorting trains, patrolling vulnerable sections, and managing onboard safety. This has led to static security points like station entry and exit gates, waiting halls, and administrative buildings—being left relatively unattended.

SWR to deploy 338 home guards at key railway stations to strenghen static secuity presence

"With limited manpower, we've had to prioritise train-based and mobile security over maintaining a constant presence at key access points," said Manjunath Kanamadi, Chief Public Relations Officer of SWR, speaking to Bangalore Mirror. "A request has already been sent to the Railway Board to fill the vacant posts, and the recruitment process is underway. In the meantime, RPF personnel will continue to focus on onboard and station security."

The KHGs will be stationed at crucial points, including station entrances, platforms, and other sensitive locations within the railway premises. Their presence is expected to enhance static surveillance, while giving the RPF more flexibility to manage dynamic duties across the railway network.

To address division-wise gaps, SWR plans to deploy 110 home guards in the Hubballi division (which has 112 RPF vacancies), 108 in Mysuru (114 vacancies), and 160 in Bengaluru, the most impacted division, with 276 posts lying vacant.

Officials have also urged the Railway Board to expedite the recruitment process and explore regional-level hiring, which would open doors for more youth from Karnataka to join the force and strength security.

Rising real estate demand in Ramohalli

Ramoahalli, a rapidly developing area near Mysore Road, is witnessing a surge in real estate activity, driven by major infrastructure projects like the Challaghatta Metro extension and the Bengaluru–Mysore Expressway corridor.

These developments have significantly pushed up land prices, making the region a lucrative investment destination. Surendra Kumar, a realtor said, "Mysore Road, a key highway connecting Bengaluru to Mysuru and Ramanagara, has become a hotspot for real estate investors.

The expressway corridor and the extended metro network have transformed the region, attracting interest from buyers and developers alike. As a result, areas like Ramoahalli are seeing a boom in land investments, with premium residential plots now available."

Kengeri new extension: a growing urban centre

Realtors said that several development projects along Mysore Road and in Ramoahalli have contributed to the rapid urbanisation of nearby areas, making them comparable to Bengaluru's expanding localities like Kengeri New Extension. The region now hosts luxury high-rise apartments, large shopping malls, reputed educational institutions, and multi-specialty hospitals. Besides serving Bengaluru, it also offers easy access to Mysore and Kanakapura Road.

"For safe investments, experts advise buyers to opt for BDA- or BMRDA-approved plots. Recognising this, over 3,000 families have chosen Rajarshi Developers Private Limited for their real estate investments. The well-connected roads in this region have significantly boosted land prices," said a realtor.

Challaghatta metro expansion: a game-changer for real estate

Kavya Kumar, a realtor added, "The extended Namma Metro Purple Line to Challaghatta has been a boon for the real estate market in Ramohalli. This metro expansion has improved daily commutes, making it easier for professionals and business owners to travel across the city.

The area is well-connected to key institutions such as Rajarajeshwari Dental College, Rajarajeshwari Engineering College, Don Bosco Institute, Marigold International School, and Quest University. Additionally, Kengeri Metro and Bus Stations, Kengeri Railway Station, Gopalan Mall, BGS Hospital, and Sparsh Hospital are all within a short distance, enhancing the region's appeal.

With superior connectivity, a pleasant living environment, and proximity to essential services, plots in and around Kengeri and Ramoahalli are witnessing increasing demand." **Prakash VL**

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Bengaluru leads real estate equity investments in Q1 2025

Bengaluru emerged as the top destination for real estate equity investments during the first quarter of 2025 (January–March), outpacing Mumbai and Delhi-NCR. According to CBRE India, the three major metros collectively accounted for approximately 67% of the total capital inflows in the Indian real estate sector during this period. Developers continued to drive investment momentum, contributing 46% of the total equity inflows. Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs) followed with a 23% share, registering a significant quarter-on-quarter increase—underscoring rising institutional interest in built-up assets.

Commenting on the investment trend, Anshuman Magazine, Chairman & CEO - India, South-East Asia, Middle East & Africa, CBRE, said, "India's real estate sector continues to demonstrate resilience and attract sustained investor interest despite global headwinds.

The sharp uptick in capital inflows during Jan-Mar'25 reflects strong fundamentals, robust demand across asset classes, and growing confidence among both domestic and foreign investors.

With structural shifts in occupier preferences and evolving market dynamics, we expect this positive momentum to continue across core and emerging segments throughout the year."

Gaurav Kumar, Managing Director, Capital Markets and Land, CBRE India, highlighted the growing appetite for development-focused assets, stating, "The first quarter of 2025 has set a strong precedent for the year, with notable investor interest in development assets, particularly in residential and office segments.

The surge in activity from REITs and institutional players further highlights the maturity and depth of the Indian real estate investment landscape. We anticipate continued capital deployment in built-up office, warehousing, and alternative asset classes such as data centres and healthcare, backed by a healthy pipeline of opportunities and stable macroeconomic indicators."

Outlook for 2025

CBRE's outlook for the year remains positive, with equity investments expected to maintain upward momentum, especially in built-up office and warehousing assets. The acquisition pipeline also looks robust for residential, warehousing, and mixed-use development sites.

With Bengaluru taking the lead in Q1 2025 and investor confidence remaining robust, India's real estate sector appears well-positioned for sustained growth through the year.

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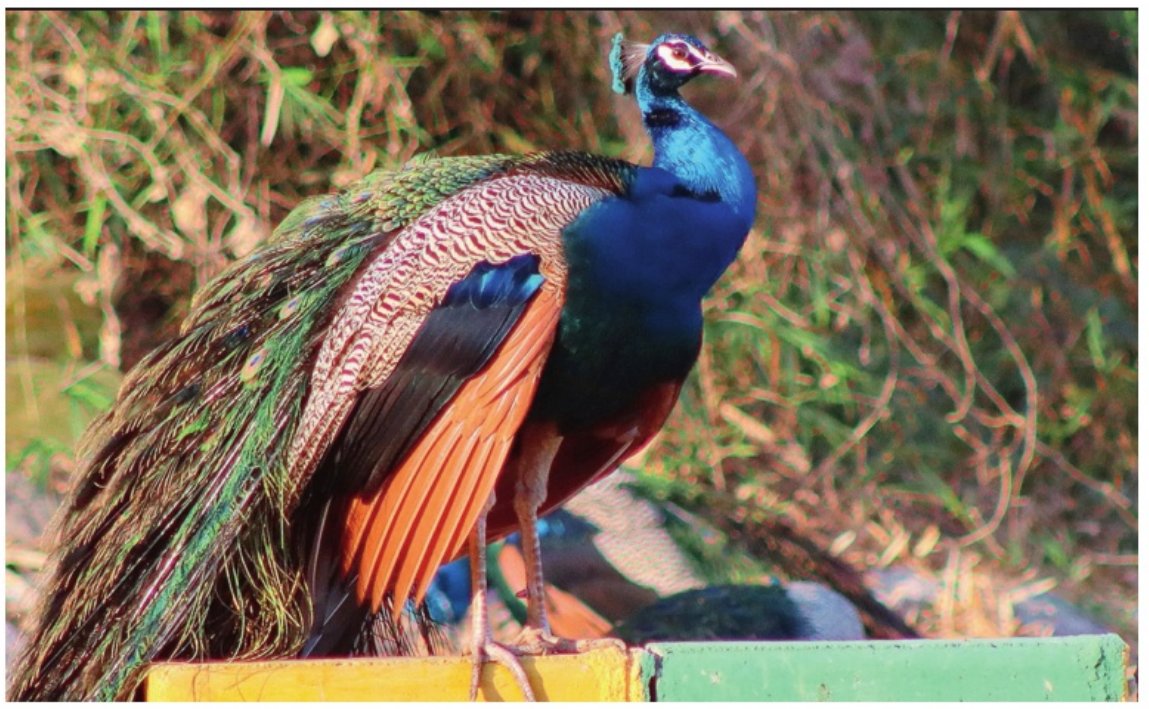

Nature's silent celebration

Our reader shares that while spending a quiet moment at Doddakallasandra Lake, they were lucky enough to witness a beautiful sight, a peacock in all its glory, seemingly searching for its mate. "It looked as though Nature was also celebrating in its own way," they write.

The picture was clicked by BM reader **Sridhar Comaravalli**

If you have a picture and a story to share, send us the picture with your name and number at **mybangaloremirror@timesofindia.com**

BBMP slashes zone funds despite record budget

BBMP unveils record budget, but zones face Rs 450 cr cut and rising centralization

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Despite presenting a record 20,439.77 crore budget for the year 2025-26 surpassing even the annual budgets of states like Sikkim and Mizoram the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) has come under fire for gross imbalance in fund distribution among its eight zones.

In the BBMP's 2025-26 budget, all zones have seen a cut in allocations. East zone received 420.44 crore (down 20.19%), West 414.56 crore (down 17.53%), South 410.37 crore (down 17.51%), Yelahanka 134.64 crore (down 19.70%), Mahadevapura 193.04 crore (down 22.87%), Bommanahalli 210.76 crore (down 22.15%), RR Nagar 188.57 crore (down 20.25%), and Dasarahalli 98.94 crore (down 20.62%) compared to last year.

Civic activist Avinash Kumar said, "Although citizens are directed to approach zonal offices for grievances and civic issues, the lack of financial support has rendered these offices powerless to implement solutions. As a result, citizens are forced to escalate issues to the central office."

Of the total budget, only 2,071 crore has been earmarked for the zones. Interestingly, three centrally located zones received 1,250 crore, while the remaining five must share just 750 crore. On top of this, the central office has independently allocated 1,027.82 crore for zone-specific works up from 620.93 crore last year raising further concerns about centralised spending.

What's more, despite a 7,000 crore increase in the overall budget from 13,000 crore in 2024-25, zonal allocations have dropped by 450 crore from last year's 2,579 crore.

DID YOU KNOW?

An ancient jawbone discovered in Taiwan belonged to an enigmatic group of early human ancestors called Denisovans, scientists reported Thursday. Relatively little is known about Denisovans, an extinct group of human cousins that interacted with Neanderthals and Homo sapiens.
"Denisovan fossils are very scarce," said study co-author Takumi Tsutaya of the Graduate University for Advanced Studies in Japan. Until now, only a few confirmed fossils, partial jawbones, a few teeth, and part of a finger bone had been found in caves in Siberia and Tibet. Some scientists believe remains discovered in a cave in Laos may also be Denisovan.

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Warren Buffett did not praise Trump's recent economic policies

As the stock market reeled from President Donald Trump's move to institute widespread global tariffs, Trump shared a video on Truth Social on Friday that erroneously claimed legendary investor Warren Buffet praised his recent economic policies
As the stock market reeled Friday from President Donald Trump's move to institute widespread global tariffs, Trump shared a video on Truth Social that erroneously claimed legendary investor Warren Buffett praised his recent economic policies.

Here's a closer look at the facts.

CLAIM: Warren Buffett said President Donald Trump is "is making the best economic moves he's seen in 50 years."

THE FACTS: This is false. Berkshire Hathaway, Buffett's company, issued a statement shortly after Trump posted the video, calling reports on social media attributing comments to Buffett "false." Buffett told a reporter Friday that he won't be commenting on the economy until Berkshire Hathaway's annual meeting later this spring.

"There are reports currently circulating on social media (including Twitter, Facebook and TikTok) regarding comments allegedly made by Warren E. Buffett. All such reports are false," reads the Berkshire Hathaway statement.

The company did not specify which reports the statement was referring to and did not respond to requests for clarification.

In the video the president shared, a voiceover states as it shows a clip of Buffett: "Trump is purposely crashing the stock market by 20% this month, but he's doing it on purpose. And this is why Warren Buffett just said Trump is making the best economic moves he's seen in over 50 years."

The video's audio comes from a March 13 Instagram post.

CNBC reporter Becky Quick reported Friday that Buffett said any quotes circulating on social media about the current economic situation that are purportedly from him are not authentic.

"He says that he's not talking to anybody about anything related to the markets, the economy or tariffs, and that he will not be doing that between now and the annual meeting for Berkshire Hathaway, which takes place on Saturday, May 3," Quick said in a CNBC segment.

However, Buffett did speak briefly about tariffs in an interview for CBS News' "Sunday Morning" that aired March 2.

"Tariffs are actually, we've had a lot of experience with them. They're an act of war to some degree," he said in response to a question on how he thinks tariffs will affect the economy.

He was vaguer when asked how he sees the state of the economy saying, "I can't talk about it now, I really can't."

In recent years, Buffett has stopped commenting on politics or other controversial subjects because, he has said, he doesn't want to hurt Berkshire's businesses by offending anyone. The long-time Democrat hasn't publicly backed any candidates for office since Hillary Clinton ran for president.

He did offer advice addressed to "Uncle Sam" in his most recent annual letter to shareholders, reminding the country that "we need you to maintain a stable currency and that result requires both wisdom and vigilance on your part."

Representatives for Trump did not respond to a request for comment.

The S&P 500 lost 6% Friday after China matched Trump's big raise in tariffs announced earlier this week. The move increased the stakes in a trade war that could end with a recession. -AP

BBMP staffers in firing line

The High Court has overturned a trial court's decision that had discharged numerous BBMP engineers and contractors in cases related to work irregularities between 2005 and 2012.

Justice HP Sandesh granted the state government's petition, reversing orders in 115 petitions that had discharged approximately 450 individuals.

The bench stated: "The order passed by the Trial Court in all the cases are set aside. The matters are remitted back to the Trial Court to consider the matter afresh in view of the observations made by this Court on merits.

The Trial Court is directed to consider the sanction order given by the State to continue the proceedings against the accused where the proceedings have already been quashed by giving liberty to file sanction order and continue to proceed against them from the stage of taking cognizance."

The defendants faced charges under IPC Sections 120B, 409, 465, 468 and 477A, alongside Sections 13(1)(c)(d) and 13(2) of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988, for allegedly causing financial losses to the state treasury through collusion with private contractors.

The authorities registered the FIR based on the TVCC report following a preliminary inquiry against the accused, who were responsible for allocating and supervising BBMP civil works including road asphalting and drain construction.

The allegations suggest they failed to conduct proper inspections and assisted contractors in obtaining payments exceeding agreed amounts. The trial court independently discharged the accused under Sections 227 and 239 of Cr.P.C. without any discharge applications. —BMB

IN COURT

Ad on bag proves costly

A Bengaluru consumer court has directed Tonique, a liquor retailer, to compensate a customer with Rs 5,000 for imposing charges on a carry bag that displayed the company's branding, logo and outlet information.

The Bengaluru Urban District Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission issued a ruling last month on a complaint by Praveen B, aged 31, from St Thomas town. The commission additionally mandated Tonique to contribute Rs 1 lakh to the consumer welfare fund for engaging in unfair trade practices.

The incident occurred on November 23, 2023, when Praveen purchased beverages valued at Rs 1,585 from Tonique and was charged Rs 14.29 for a branded carry bag.

He contended this constituted service deficiency and unfair practice, citing previous consumer forum decisions that prohibited charging customers for bags that function as advertisements.

Tonique's defence maintained that the customer willingly requested the bag with prior knowledge of the charge.

They stated that alternatives were available, including using one's own bag, carrying items without a bag, or returning later with a bag from home. The Commission dismissed Tonique's justification, deeming it unprofessional and unfair.

Concluding that charging for an advertising-bearing bag constituted unfair trade practice, the Commission ordered Tonique to reimburse the Rs 14.29 bag charge along with the litigation expenses. —BMB

Betting & ticket racket mar IPL

Several arrested for accepting bets, selling tickets obtained from insiders at sky-high prices

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Spectators at the Chinnaswamy Stadium on Wednesday. Raids were conducted outside the stadium

Cricket fever might be gripping the nation, but in Bengaluru, some are cashing in on the craze illegally. In a swift operation, the Central Crime Branch (CCB) arrested eight individuals for selling tickets at double the price, while three separate cases of black ticketing were registered across the city.

The betting racket, busted on Thursday, was being operated out near Chinnaswamy Stadium. According to police officials, the accused were accepting bets on the ongoing Indian Premier League (IPL) match at a 1:5 rate—meaning, for every rupee bet, the payout was five rupees if the prediction proved correct. This tempting lure had drawn several punters into the net.

"The accused were laying bets. CCB also arrested one accused who used to do ball by ball betting, that is when it is telecasted live there is a delay of a few seconds so the person who is watching a live match in stadium gets to know first. In this way, this can be predicted and the accused can charge exorbitant prices," said DCP Akshay Machindra. "We seized Rs 1.25 crore and 20 tickets from the illegal betting racket."

Black tickets

In a separate crackdown, three cases of black ticketing were busted and two persons were arrested for selling IPL tickets at inflated prices near Gate No. 10 of M. Chinnaswamy Stadium on Wednesday evening. Manoj Khande, 28, from Chhattisgarh and Santosh, 28, from RT Nagar, were caught red-handed with four Tata IPL 2025 tickets for the RCB vs Delhi Capitals match. The accused offered tickets worth Rs 1,200 for Rs 7,000 each.

When questioned, Manoj revealed that the tickets were provided by NMS Canteen staffers Shivakumar H and Nagaraj K.

In another raid on the same day, five persons were arrested near the stadium for illegally selling complimentary tickets. The accused were caught near various stadium gates with eight complimentary tickets marked "not for sale", trying to sell them for prices ranging from Rs 5,000 to Rs 9,000 each.

The accused are Hemanthumar, Saiprasad, Bharat, Shivraj, and another unnamed man. The accused admitted to obtaining tickets through acquaintances or unofficial sources. Authorities also seized five mobile phones and traced payment transactions made via Google Pay.

On the same day, CCB arrested a 43-year-old man for illegally selling tickets at inflated prices outside the stadium during a raid conducted around 7 pm. The accused has been identified as Manjunath, manager of a juice parlour. Upon inspection, officials found six IPL tickets in his possession, including two high-value passes worth Rs 13,000 each and four tickets worth Rs 1,500. Manjunath confessed to selling the Rs 13,000 tickets for Rs 32,000 and the Rs 1,500 ones for Rs 12,500 in total. The tickets had seating details for executive and general areas for the April 10 match. The accused was found misusing an ID card issued by DNA and was booked for cheating and black marketing.

3 held for IPL betting on Dubai exchange

The Central Crime Branch (CCB) arrested three individuals for allegedly betting on IPL matches through the Dubai Exchange. The accused—Santosh, Yash, and Rajesh— who hail from Rajasthan, were apprehended from the Jeevan Bhimanagar police station limits during a raid. Police seized Rs 5 lakh in cash, a mobile phone, and a laptop used for the illegal activity. The trio was found placing bets on every IPL match.

> **"Police are probing who is behind the black-ticket sales and how these tickets were being procured**
>
> —Police official

Some enthusiastic fans, eager to witness the live action, were shelling out exorbitant amounts for tickets.

The police have urged the public to steer clear of illegal betting and refrain from buying tickets from unauthorised sources. According to senior police officials, there are suspicions that a few KSCA officials may be involved in the black-market ticket racket. Questions are being raised about how black marketers are able to access tickets so easily. How are individuals working in canteens getting hold of these tickets? These concerns are currently under investigation. "Police are probing who is behind the black-ticket sales and how these tickets were being procured," a senior police official said.

IN BRIEF

SIT to probe commission charge

The Congress-led government in Karnataka, on Friday, formed the Special Investigation Team (SIT) to probe the 40 per cent commission allegations against the previous Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government.

The SIT has been directed to take action in this regard within two months.

Speaking at a press conference held at Vidhana Soudha in Bengaluru, Karnataka Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister H.K. Patil made the announcement in this regard.

"The state Cabinet has decided to form a SIT to probe the 40 per cent commission charges that were previously made against the BJP government," he said.

He added that an inquiry commission headed by retired Justice H.N. Nagamohan Das had been constituted to investigate the allegations made by the contractors' association.

After the commission submitted its report, the matter was presented before the Cabinet.

Some of the details were discussed in the Cabinet meeting, and it was agreed that a more in-depth discussion is still needed.

Minister Patil said, "The government has compiled information based on complaints and submitted a report. Out of three lakh public works, 1,729 works have been flagged with allegations. There were discrepancies in project planning, fund release, and Letter of Credit issuance."

"The Cabinet discussed the extent of the irregularities. In some cases, Bills exceeded the sanctioned grants, and certain projects have raised suspicions. There were also instances where intermediaries were reportedly involved during the tender allocation process. Given the serious nature of the report, the Cabinet has decided to form an SIT," he added.

The SIT has been instructed to take action within two months, Minister Patil said.

Regarding the Nandi Infrastructure Corridor Enterprises (NICE) Road project, the Minister said the issue was also brought up in the Cabinet meeting. —IANS

Fund crunch breaks lake squad's back

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

marshals has come down to two per shift and it has become a tough task for them to monitor the lake and it is also not fair to expect the two marshals (in each shift) to prevent encroachment of lake land or dumping of debris on the bunds of these lakes.

"We have not received our salaries since October. It has become tough for the marshals to make both ends meet due to the delay in receiving salary. Most of the marshals have quit the jobs as they did not get salary for the last six months," said Captain Sadashiv Badigere, supervisor, BBMP marshals, Bellandur Lake.

It is also quite shocking to see stationary vehicles (Parahari) given to the marshals by the BBMP, at Bellandur and Varthur Lakes. "The BBMP did not release funds for diesel and repair of the vehicle since October. I have approached the BBMP authorities including Joint Commissioner (Mahadevapura Zone) seeking a solution to the problems but in vain. No one is bothered to provide funds for diesel and repair of the vehicle. The condition of the vehicle allotted to Varthur Lake is the same," Captain Sadashiv Badigere said.

One of the stationary vehicles at Bellandur Lake

"We have not received our salaries since October. It has become tough for the marshals to make both ends meet due to the delay in receiving salary

—Sadashiv Badigere, supervisor, BBMP marshals, Bellandur Lake

Expressing concern over the lack of security at Varthur Lake, Jagadeesh Reddy of Varthur Rising said the number of marshals had been reduced at both the lakes due to non-payment to the vendor agency. "Streetlights, CCTV cameras and fencing installed were damaged leading to increased dumping of garbage, C&D waste within the lake boundary," said Reddy.

When contacted, BBMP Joint Commissioner (Mahadevapura) Dr Dakshayini said that no one has brought to her notice about the defunct vehicles (Parahari) at Varthur and Bellandur Lakes. "As far as the delay in paying salaries to the marshals, I am not the authority. You have to contact the BBMP Zonal Commissioner (Mahadevapura)," she said.

When informed, Captain Rajbir Singh, Chief Marshal, said the BBMP authorities are yet to process salary bills of marshals from November 2024. "We have submitted all the bills but the BBMP authorities are yet to pass those bills," he said.

Meanwhile, BBMP Zonal Commissioner (Mahadevapura) was not available for comment.

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personal

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Jamuna Renjarla W/o Shiva Ranjerla R/o #384, Flat No-001, Sai Ranka Enclave Dwarakanagar Channasandra B'lore-560098 have changed my name to Jamuna Ranjerla.

I, PREMA LEELA D, D/o Devasaranam P, and W/O Syed Mohammed Riaz Nawaz R/o No E-701, Banyan Block Shriram Suhaana Apts, Doddaballapura Road, Opp BMSIT College Yelahanka Bengaluru 560064. I have changed my name to ASMA NAWAZ vide affidavit dated: 09/04/2025 Before Notary B M Chandrashekar Bangalore.

I , Savitri Prasad Kini, W/o. Avinash Ramachandra Kamath, aged about 28 years, residing at No.4/422, Jnanabharathi Layout 3rd Block, Valagerahalli, Bengaluru 560059. I have changed my name to SAVITRI KINI, VIDE AFFIDAVIT DATED:07.04.2025 before notary S R THULASIKRISHNA, Bangalore

I, Sowrirajan Venugopalan R/o No.115, S-2, Landmark 9, 3rd cross, 3rd stage, Vinayka layout, Vijayanagar, Bengaluru 560040 have changed my name to Appathurai Venugopalan Sowriraajan (A Ve Sowriraajan) shall be called by this name for all purpose

I Deepika D/o Mukesh Goyal R/o Avani Hills Apartment, B305, C Rd, 2nd Phase, Gattigere, RR Nagar, Bengaluru, Karnataka 560098 have changed my name to Deepika Goyal For all purposes.

I Catherine Louis W/O, Lakkanna R/o No 36 3rd Floor 1st Main 8th Cross Vinayakanagar Adugodi Post Bengaluru - 560030 have changed my name to Catherine Lakkanna.

Caste census report presented to Cabinet; K'taka Govt to decide on April 17

Bengaluru, April 11 (IANS) The Karnataka caste census report was presented before the Cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Friday at the Vidhana Soudha in Bengaluru. However, the state government will take a decision on the recommendations of the report on April 17.

Confirming the development to the media, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah stated in Bengaluru that the caste census report was presented during the Cabinet meeting on Friday.

However, the recommendations of the report are not yet known. A few ministers are currently reviewing the recommendations, and once they have done so, the matter will be discussed in the upcoming Cabinet meeting scheduled for April 17 at 4 pm.

"We will discuss the matter in the Cabinet meeting and take a decision," CM Siddaramaiah said.

Sources stated that during the Cabinet meeting, the caste census report was presented along with the gist of the report.

Sources revealed that the Comprehensive Report of the 2015 Survey contains caste-wise population details; key characteristics of caste groups (Scheduled Castes); key characteristics of caste groups (Scheduled Tribes); key characteristics of castes and communities (excluding SC/ST) and caste-wise data for Assembly constituencies.

"'Data Analysis Report – 2024' of the 2015 survey contains caste and community-wise (excluding SC/ST) social, educational, and economic data; caste and community-wise (SC/ST) social, educational, and economic data; taluk-wise, caste-wise report on families and population and information from secondary sources regarding education, employment, and political representation," sources stated.

The report was submitted in more than 46 volumes and the data was also submitted in 2 CDs to the government on various aspects of the caste survey.

In 2014, Siddaramaiah (during his first tenure as the Chief Minister) ordered the Karnataka Socio-Economic and Educational Census. A committee headed by the then Backward Classes Commission Chairman, H. Kantharaju, did the survey at a cost of around Rs 169 crore. The report was ready by 2016; it was, however, put in cold storage by subsequent governments. The Congress and JD(S) coalition government headed by H.D. Kumaraswamy and the BJP government headed by B.S. Yediyurappa and Basavaraj Bommai also kept the report pending.

IANS

Tariff blow
European shares down for third week after tariff whiplash

BangaloreMirror | 11
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AI-generated images can exploit how your mind works - here's how to spot them

REALITY IS AN AI ILLUSION

I'm more of a scroller than a poster on social media. Like many people, I wind down at the end of the day with a scroll binge, taking in videos of Italian grandmothers making pasta or baby pygmy hippos frolicking.

For a while, my feed was filled with immaculately designed tiny homes, fueling my desire for minimalist paradise. Then, I started seeing AI-generated images; many contained obvious errors such as staircases to nowhere or sinks within sinks. Yet, commenters rarely pointed them out, instead admiring the aesthetic.

These images were clearly AI-generated and didn't depict reality. Did people just not notice? Not care?

As a cognitive psychologist, I'd guess "yes" and "yes." My expertise is in how people process and use visual information. I primarily investigate how people look for objects and information visually, from the mundane searches of daily life, such as trying to find a dropped earring, to more critical searches, like those conducted by radiologists or search-and-rescue teams.

With my understanding of how people process images and notice - or don't notice - detail, it's not surprising to me that people aren't tuning in to the fact that many images are AI-generated.

We've been here before

The struggle to detect AI-generated images mirrors past detection challenges such as spotting photoshopped images or computer-generated images in movies.

But there's a key difference: Photo editing and CGI require intentional design by artists, while AI images are generated by algorithms trained on datasets, often without human oversight. The lack of oversight can lead to imperfections or inconsistencies that can feel unnatural, such as the unrealistic physics or lack of consistency between frames that characterize what's sometimes called "AI slop."

Visual attention operates like a zoom lens: You scan broadly to get an overview of your environment or phone screen, but fine details require focused effort. Human perceptual systems evolved to quickly assess environments for any threats to survival, with sensitivity to sudden changes — such as a quick-moving predator — sacrificing precision for speed of detection.

Despite these differences, studies show people struggle to distinguish real images from synthetic ones, regardless of origin..

Attention shapes what you see

Spotting errors in AI images requires noticing small details, but the human visual system isn't wired for that when you're casually scrolling. Instead, while online, people take in the gist of what they're viewing and can overlook subtle inconsistencies.

People also miss things they aren't actively paying attention to or looking for. Psychologists call this inattentional blindness: Focusing on one task causes you to overlook other details, even obvious ones. In the famous invisible gorilla study, participants asked to count basketball passes in a video failed to notice someone in a gorilla suit walking through the middle of the scene.

Similarly, when your focus is on the broader content of an AI image, such as a cozy tiny home, you're less likely to notice subtle distortions. In a way, the sixth finger in an AI image is today's invisible gorilla - hiding in plain sight because you're not looking for it.

Efficiency over accuracy in thinking

Our cognitive limitations go beyond visual perception. Human thinking uses two types of processing: fast, intuitive thinking based on mental shortcuts, and slower, analytical thinking that requires effort. When scrolling, our fast system likely dominates, leading us to accept images at face value. Adding to this issue is the tendency to seek information that confirms your beliefs or reject information that goes against them.

Beating the machine

While AI gets better at detecting AI, humans need tools to do the same. Here's how:

- **Trust your gut.** If something feels off, it probably is. Your brain expertly recognizes objects and faces, even under varying conditions. Perhaps you've experienced what psychologists call the uncanny valley and felt unease with certain humanoid faces. This experience shows people can detect anomalies, even when they can't fully explain what's wrong.
- **Scan for clues.** AI struggles with certain elements: hands, text, reflections, lighting inconsistencies and unnatural textures. If an image seems suspicious, take a closer look.
- **Think critically.** Sometimes, AI generates photorealistic images with impossible scenarios. If you see a political figure casually surprising baristas or a celebrity eating concrete, ask yourself: Does this make sense? If not, it's probably fake.
- **Check the source.** Is the poster a real person? Reverse image search can help trace a picture's origin. If the metadata is missing, it might be generated by AI.

(Arryn Robbins , University of Richmond, The Conversation)

BITS & BYTES

CONTRACT TERMINATED

US Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth has ordered the termination of several information technology services contracts valued at $5.1 billion, including companies such as Accenture, Booz Allen Hamilton and Deloitte, according to a Pentagon memo.

The contracts "represent non-essential spending on third party consultants" for services Pentagon employees can perform, Hegseth said in the memo released late on Thursday. "These terminations represent $5.1 billion in wasteful spending," Hegseth said, adding that their termination would result in "nearly $4 billion in estimated savings." **Reuters**

INDIA ON AI PATH

India is not behind in the global race for artificial intelligence (AI) leadership and is now focused on scaling up its own AI mission, Infosys co-founder and Aadhaar architect, Nandan Nilekani, said on Friday.

He highlighted that the Indian AI mission is already in place and is moving forward with small models that need to be scaled up.

"Indians should not worry about not having developed large AI models like some other countries. We should not be losing sleep because somebody has not built any AI models," he said while speaking at the 'Global Technology Summit' here.

"India is already on the path of progress. Now talks should be about scaling it up," Nilekani added. **IANS**

Celebrating Ashadhi Ekadashi Since 2005
An Evening of Abhangs 'BOLAVA VITTHAL'
।। पंचम निषाद ।।
बोलवा विठ्ठल
Prathamesh Laghate
Mugdha Vaishampayan | Anand Bhate
Co-Artistes : Prasad Padhye, Sukhad Munde, Aditya Oke
Shadaj Godkhindi and Suryakant Surve
27 Friday June 2025
6:30 pm
Please be seated by 6 pm
(Few Seats Reserved)
At Chowdiah Memorial Auditorium
16th Cross, Malleswaram Bengaluru
Tickets available on bookmyshow
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HEALTH TIP: Hydration plays a major role in achieving glass skin—plump, dewy skin is essential

To keep your complexion smooth, exfoliate 1–2 times a week using a gentle chemical exfoliant with AHAs or BHAs

BangaloreMirror | 12
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PERILS OF PORN

Growing body of research shows it causes lasting harm to the brain and relationships

While pornography has been present throughout human history in various forms, such as ancient erotic art to more modernised motion pictures, research shows an increase in use over recent decades given the rise of technology and accessibility.

Pornography, meaning any media intended to depict or describe sexual content to heighten sexual arousal or pleasure, can serve many purposes. Users may seek sexual pleasure, find it a fun way to fight boredom, or turn to it because they are down or stressed and perhaps want to escape their feelings.

Statistics show pornography to be commonplace: A 2018 study found that 91.5% of men and 60.2% of women had consumed it in the past month.

It's important to ask: What does viewing explicit materials do to your brain and real-life sexual and romantic relationships, and specifically to the people who see it when they are as young as 10 years old or even earlier?

I am a licenced marriage and family therapist specialising in the treatment of a variety of mental health challenges. These include issues that are often seen in the context of relationships and larger systems such as media and pornography.

While neither problematic pornography use nor addiction to it is listed in the handbook used for mental health diagnostics, known as the DSM, it may still be detrimental for many people in terms of their behavior, their relationships and their mental and physical well-being. People with problematic porn use have trouble reducing or controlling their pornography use despite the harm it does to their life.

I will walk through some of these consequences below, starting with how the brain can be changed with pornography use.

Brain changes behind pornography use

While some of the most pertinent studies were done a decade ago or more, they remain highly relevant. Conducting research in this arena can be difficult due to the DSM's exclusion of pornography "addiction" as a disorder as well as the sensitive nature of the topic. Controlled experiments on humans, particularly of this kind, are inherently unethical, therefore studies rely on surveys and reports.

A 2015 study - one of the first brain scan studies on male pornography users - found a correlation between pornography use and reduced gray matter in part of the brain's reward system involved in motivation and decision-making. The study also reported lower responsiveness to pornography and other sexual stimuli due to desensitization.

This pattern likely results from lower connectivity between the prefrontal cortex - the decision-making part of the brain - and the reward as more porn is consumed. This in turn leads to increased cravings and impulsivity in order to achieve the previous levels of reward in the brain.

Another study, published in 2016, found that 49% of subjects had experienced pursuing content that was previously not interesting to them or that they considered disgusting. Because pornography can affect brain changes and subsequent pleasure responses, porn users may eventually feel the need to seek more extreme content.

This pursuit, in attempts to override the chemistry of the changing brain, may lend to disruption in the person's life, often within relationships.

So what does this look like and how are relationships suffering as a result?

How relationships can suffer

While some research suggests that pornography use can positively support sexuality exploration in couples, including increased quality and frequency of sex with use of pornography, most studies highlight its negative impact on intimate relationships.

The use of pornography is often associated with less relationship satisfaction and stability. Higher rates of infidelity, lower levels of commitment, increased emotional detachment and loss of trust are also evident in relationships affected by problematic porn use. The challenges related to unrealistic expectations, decreased sexual interest in a partner and increased partner insecurity influenced by pornography use have also been reported.

One 2011 survey found that women more often told researchers that they had less sex as a result of their partner's pornography use, and men reported being less aroused by sex with their partner. A 2021 study looking at the correlation between pornography use and sexual dysfunction in young men ages 18-35 found that more than 20% of sexually active participants reported some degree of erectile dysfunction in the month prior to the questionaire. This contrasts to 8% in men 20-29 and 11% in the 30-39 age group, based on a study of the general prevalence of erectile dysfunction across several countries.

Given the prevalence of pornography use as well as data that indicates that consuming porn can damage relationships between intimate partners, what can couples do about it?

Finding a way forward

Since pornography use is often associated with shame and secrecy, it's important for affected couples experiencing problems because one of them is consuming too much porn to openly discuss it to move through these challenges and work together as a team.

Talking with loved ones and trusted support, such as close friends, about difficult issues is known to reduce shame, making taboo subject areas more approachable.

I highly recommend seeking support from licensed therapists, especially those who specialize in the treatment of problematic pornography use, given the sensitive nature. In addition, peer support groups can be helpful in creating a sense of community and reducing isolation.

Effects on young people

It's no surprise that pornography is getting into the hands of young people at earlier ages as accessibility via cellphones and internet use has been increasing.

One 2022 study from Common Sense Media, an organization dedicated to helping parents navigate suitable media content for their children, reported that 73% of study respondents between the ages of 13 and 17 have watched porn. This differs from previous decades. For example, a study conducted in 2005 found 42% of youth internet users had been exposed to pornographic content.

The 2022 study found that 54% of these young people said they had been exposed to it before reaching the age of 13, and 15% at the age of 10 or younger. About 58% said they had accidentally encountered pornographic material.

Young people's exposure to pornography can be disturbing to them and may be linked to higher rates of personality and impulse disorders.

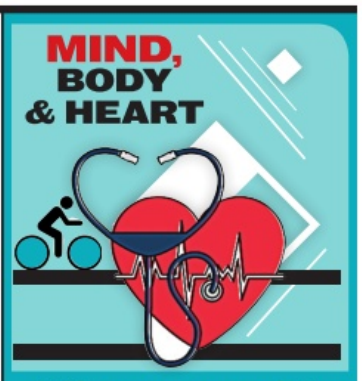
Those who are exposed to pornography at earlier ages may also end up with unrealistic views of sexual behavior and beliefs, as well as earlier sexual exploration in comparison to those who aren't.

Pornography use could have even more profound effects on the developing brain. This is because adolescent brains are undergoing rapid development, and connections are being formed and reorganized at a high rate of speed during the teen years, a physiological concept called neuroplasticity.

A 2021 study of almost 11,000 European adolescents between the ages of 14 and 17 found those exposed to pornography were more likely to engage in rule-breaking and aggressive behaviors.

These patterns drive home the great need for parental involvement in their children's internet activity.

(Danielle Sukenik, University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus, The Conversation)



All you need to know about...

To reduce hair fall

1. Go sulphate-free
SLS or Sodium Lauryl Sulfate is widely used in shampoos as a surfactant. It contributes to hair damage by stripping your scalp of natural oils and making the strands brittle. Switching to sulfate-free shampoo can cleanse your scalp without damaging hair follicles.

2. Consume Vitamin B12
Vitamin B12 deficiency is a leading cause of hair fall that goes unnoticed. An increased intake in foods rich in Vitamin B12 – eggs, fish, meat, poultry, dairy, some cereals and plant-based milks – will prevent hair thinning and increase oxygen to hair follicles.

3. Reduce stress
Stress releases the hormone cortisol that can disrupt hair growth cycle and lead to hair thinning and loss. Practicing stress-relieving activities like yoga, meditation, or deep breathing exercises can calm your mind and promote hormonal balance.

4. Keep hydrated, sleep well
Dehydration makes the body utilise the available water for essential body functions, leaving little to none for hair. This makes the hair brittle, leading to breakage. Drinking at least 8 glasses of water and sleeping for 7–8 hours will help reduce hair fall.

5. Avoid heat styling
Heat makes hair brittle which is the leading cause of breakage. Using excessive styling tools like hair straighteners, curling irons and blow dryers is not recommended if you have thinning or fine hair. Use heat protectant sprays to minimise damage.

6. Shun tight hairstyles
Ponytails, buns, top knots and braids that pull on your scalp can cause traction alopecia, a type of hair loss caused by repeated tension. Opt for looser hairstyles and use soft scrunchies to avoid stressing your roots.

—Femina

'Focus on your craft'

Soha has sane advice for Ibrahim after 'Nadaaniyan' backlash

Ibrahim Ali Khan, son of Saif Ali Khan and Amrita Singh, made his big Bollywood debut in March with the OTT film 'Nadaaniyan,' alongside Khushi Kapoor. The film was expected to launch the young stars into the spotlight, but instead, it faced a flood of criticism from both viewers and critics. As social media buzzed with harsh comments, Ibrahim's aunt, actor Soha Ali Khan, has now offered some heartfelt advice in a chat with Nayandeep Rakshit on his YouTube channel.

"Number one, I think you need to have thick skin when you join this world," Soha said, pointing out how brutal the world of entertainment can be. She added, "You need to be able to digest people's opinions, or else don't read the comments. But, I feel, like sometimes, it's important to read the comments because you can't just work in a vacuum. You have to be receptive to certain criticism, and you have to work on your craft and go forward." Soha's advice wasn't just about ignoring the hate. In her words, "Don't let your film's success or failure, perhaps, destroy you in ways, but also recognize where you need to work on something and work on your craft and become better."

No room for yes-men

One of Soha's strongest pieces of advice was about the kind of people a young actor should keep around. "There is a lot of hate in the world," she said. "And actors become easy targets because we put ourselves out there." She explained instead of shutting out the world actors should remain open to all kinds of opinions. "Do not surround yourself only with love and people who are going to say positive things and be like yes-men," she said.

—ETimes

A special experience

Actress Rasika Dugal will be seen sharing screen space for the first time with the late Irrfan Khan's son Babil Khan in the highly anticipated drama "Logout".

Reflecting on her time on set with Babil with a quiet fondness, Rasika stated, "It was a special experience working with Babil. He is a very interesting actor and it was very heartwarming to watch him give his best to work."

"I first met Babil when I worked with Irrfan in 'Qissa'. It was an honour for me to work with Irrfan early on in my career, and so special to work with Babil early in his. It felt like a full circle moment - a quiet coming together of things," she added.

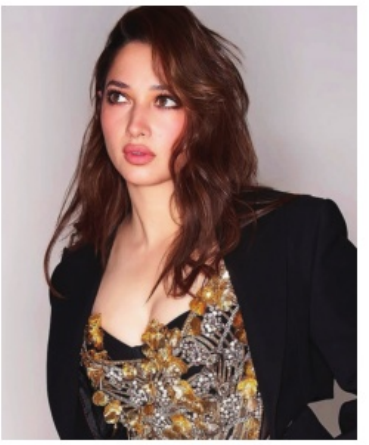
The 'Mirzapur' actress further talked about the rest of the team of "Logout" saying, "I have worked with Amit Golani (Director), Biswapati Sarkar (writer) and Sameer Saxena (creative producer) before. They are an extremely talented team. I was happy to rekindle that association even if in a small way."

Made under the direction of Amit Golani, "Logout" has been written by Biswapati Sarkar.

Along with Babil and Rasika Dugal, the project will also see Nimisha Nair, and Gandharv Dewan in pivotal roles, along with others.

—IANS

Unique beauty



Tamannaah Bhatia has become one of the most sought-after actors, mining her presence in Tamil, Telugu, and Hindi cinema, as well as on OTT platforms. Recently she spoke about her approach to self-expression through fashion.

During an interview with Indian Express, she shared the importance of embracing individuality rather than conforming to fleeting trends. She mentioned that in today's time, with social media, everyone is conscious about how they are presenting themselves. Where social media often dictates beauty standards, Tamannaah advocates for body positivity by celebrating what makes her unique.

She said, "If you truly want to make an impact, you need to lean into what sets you apart. You can either be defined by others' standards of beauty and style, or you can embrace your individuality. For me, accepting the best version of myself—however that looks—is key. I know I look different from others, and I've come to see that as my strength."

—ETimes

Gripping tale of murder

The much-awaited movie Agnyathavasi was finally released across the state on Friday. It had created curiosity among movie-goers as it is helmed by Gultoo fame Janardhan Chikkanna and produced by director Hemanth M Rao. And Chikkanna does not disappoint. Though the screenplay in the pre-intermission session is a little bit slow, the second half of the movie is quite interesting. The nonlinear screenplay may confuse and disappoint the audiences. The added advantage of the movie is the script, written by PM Krishnaraj.

The movie begins with two people running in a forest and jumping into a well. The director then introduces a flashback narrating how a police inspector (Rangayana Raghu) performs his mother's death ceremony but not many people attend it. The police inspector is posted at Naleri Police Station where no crime cases are reported in 25 years. Srinivasaiah (Sharath Lohitashwa), a land-lord, dies in mysterious circumstances. The police inspector suspects it is a murder and takes Panakaja (Pavana Gowda), the daughter of labour contractor Amachi (Yamuna Srinidhi), into custody. Anantha (Ravishankar Gowda), a police constable, wants to know how the inspector suspected Pankaja. You have to watch the movie to know how the police inspector nabbed Pankaja and what is his background.

AGNYATHAVASI

3.0 RATING | ★★★☆☆

- **DIRECTOR** Janardhan Chikkanna
- **ACTORS** Rangayana Raghu, Pavana Gowda, Siddu Moolimani, Sharath Lohitashwa, Ravishankar
- **Duration** 122 minutes
- **Certification** U/A

Director Chikkanna has succeeded in exploiting the acting skills of Rangayana Raghu. Technicians, including music director Charan Raj and cinematographer Adviatha Gurumurthy, have done excellent jobs. Greenery of Malnad region is a visual treat.

As far as the performances of actors are concerned, Rangayana Raghu is at his best. His dialogue delivery and gestures, especially in emotional scenes, are good. Ravishankar Gowda, Sharatha Lohitashwa, Aravind Kuplikar give good support. Pavana Gowda looks beautiful and has done a good job with her acting skills. Siddu Moolimani has no scope to showcase his acting skills. Yamuna Srinidhi looks rough and tough.

It is worth watching for those who like well-made thrillers.

—Y Maheswara Reddy

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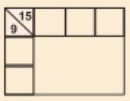
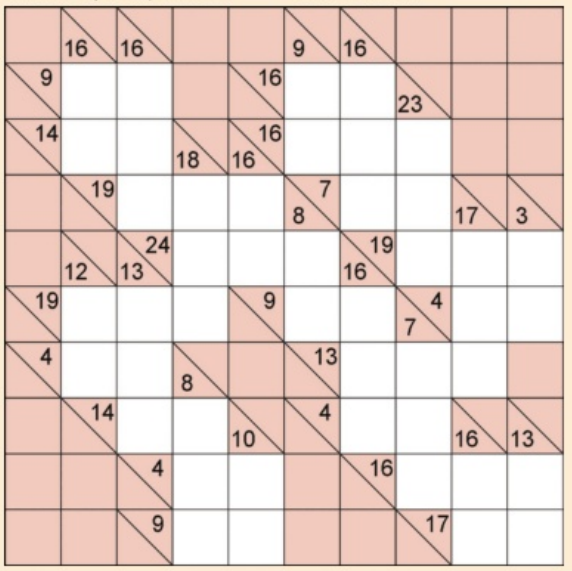
Kakuro

The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas

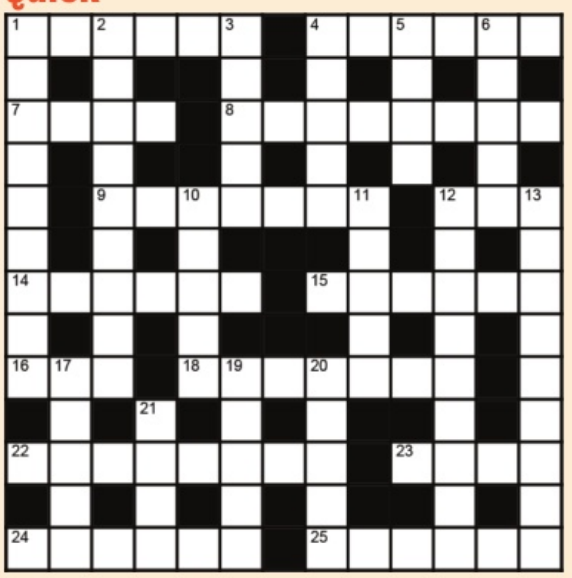


for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.

Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

1 Officers in training? (6)
4 Threadbare (6)
7 Bird's home (4)
8 Annoyance (8)
9 Renowned archer ___ Tell (7)
12 Rock group ___ Leppard (3)
14 Exclamation of joy (6)
15 Puts out by force (6)
16 __ on : fielding position (3)
18 Testimonial (7)
22 Extemporized (2-6)
23 __ __ example (e.g.) (2,2)
24 Collapse (4,2)
25 Required (6)

DOWN

1 Road that is also known as Sampangi Ramaswamy Temple Road (9)
2 Terry Pratchett's fictional universe (9)
3 Expertise; ability (5)
4 Arab country–"ray is" anagram? (5)
5 Indian wheaten flour (4)
6 Spree, drinking bout (5)
10 Minimal (5)
11 Laila's counterpart (5)
12 Reduced (9)
13 Designed or styled (9)
17 Our country (5)
19 Batman's sidekick (5)
20 Boys Scout founder Sir __-Powell (5)
21 Juice of the grape (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: T EQUALS Y

SC SN EMUK SEXMUCQJC CM RJMI IWKUK TMH QUK PMSJP CWQJ CM PKC CWKUK FHSBRAT.

Linemaro

Are you a 90 degree angle? Because you are looking right

Mindchow

Being ignorant is not as much a shame as being unwilling to learn

Joke of the day

Truth hurts... maybe not as much as jumping on a bicycle with the seat missing... but it hurts

Loop

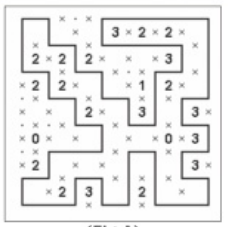
Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.

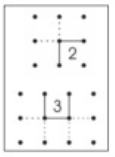
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

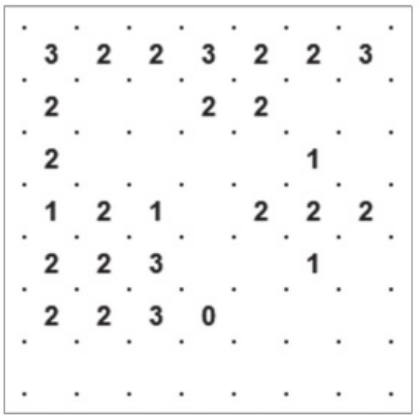
Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



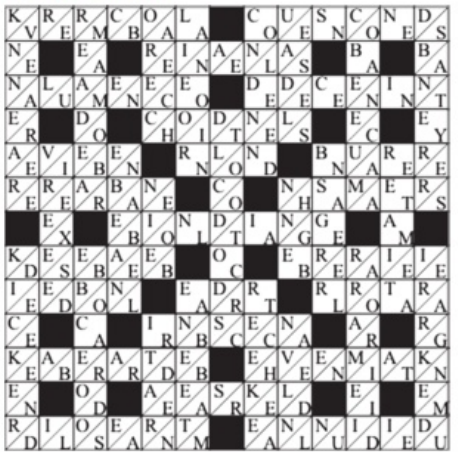
(Fig A)



(Fig B) Not Allowed



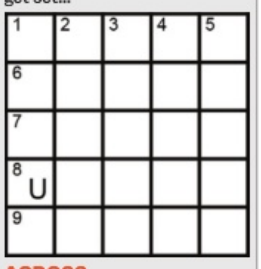
Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...



ACROSS

1 L Arab; 6 Or leg;
7 Soc no; 8 A true;
9 Meaty

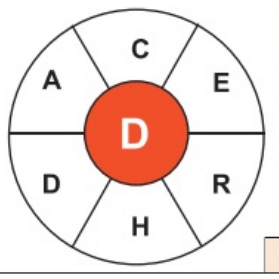
DOWN

1 Cum lo; 2 A Argo;
3 A bolt; 4 Enter;
5 Sayer

Mensapuzzle

Which letter completes the puzzle?

Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

18 Average; **20** Good; **22** Outstanding

SudokuChallenge

			9		4			2
				5		4		9
8					7		3	5
			6		3		5	4
		4				2		
2	8		7		9			
1	5		3					6
7		6		9				
4			5		1			

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

Easy = 10

4 5 7 8

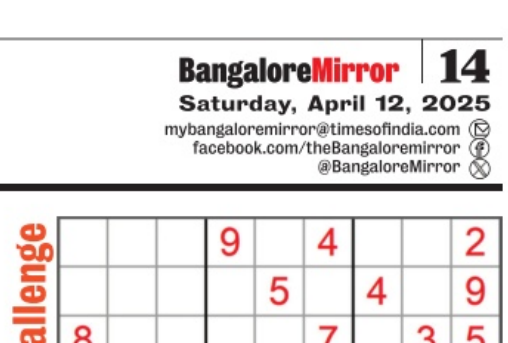
Medium = 9

1 2 3 7

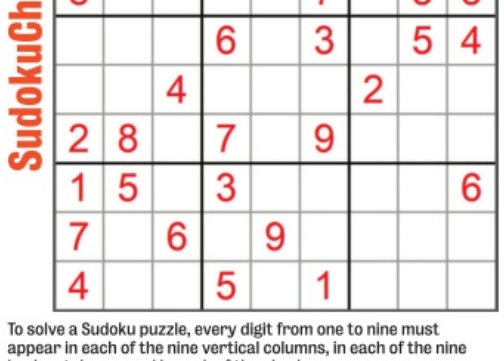
Hard = 2

2 3 5 6

Hocusfocus



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



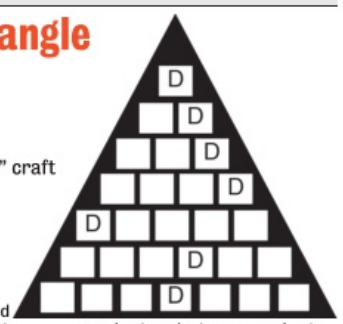
Differences: 1. Slat is missing. 2. Ear is smaller. 3. Cap is different. 4. Mouth is different. 5. End of crib is different. 6. Ball is smaller.

Riddler

Alfred and Bill are clerks at the local grocery store. Alfred can stock a shelf in 20 minutes, but Bill is new and takes 30 minutes. How long would it take for them to stock a shelf together?

Alpha triangle

1 Fourth letter
2 Identity, abbr.
3 Clear, with of
4 Power network
5 Funereal music
6 "Lighter than air" craft
7 Cooking surface

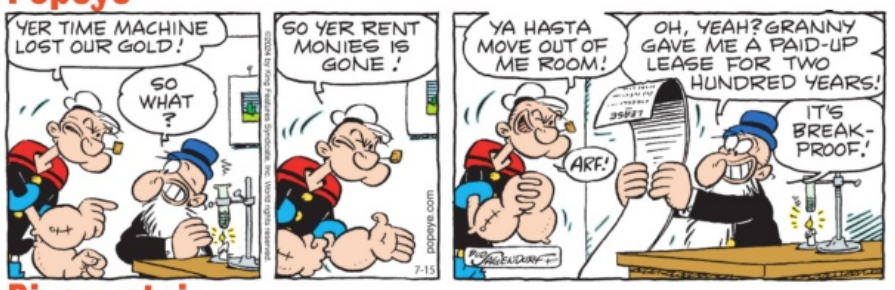


Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE

COMICS

Popeye


YER TIME MACHINE LOST OUR GOLD!
SO WHAT?
SO YER RENT MONIES IS GONE!
YA HASTA MOVE OUT OF ME ROOM!
OH, YEAH? GRANNY GAVE ME A PAID-UP LEASE FOR TWO HUNDRED YEARS!
ARF!
IT'S BREAK-PROOF.
popeye.com

Bizarrotrip

My therapist says I see every problem as a gigantic nail.
Wayno & Piraro 1-4-25
BIZARRO.COM Pig by King Features
©2025 Bizarro Simons

Diamond Lil

Hart of the city

I DON'T KNOW IF I'D BE ANY GOOD AT WRITING. I'M MORE OF A PERFORMER! I'M NOT A BEHIND-THE-SCENES GUY.
NO OFFENSE TO BEHIND-THE-SCENES GUYS, OF COURSE.
AS A BEHIND-THE-SCENES GUY, NONE TAKEN.
JUST OF THE CITY © 2022 JESSICA HICKEL
@COMICS.COM/JUSTOFTHECITY
1/4

Crankshaft

Mutts

WHAT YOUR STARS SAY TODAY

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20
You may enjoy quality time with your family, with romantic moments strengthening your bond with your spouse. Social gatherings and celebrations could bring joy. Spending on home decor or artifacts is likely. Before investing in fixed assets, ensure all documents are thoroughly reviewed.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20
Happiness and energy will define your day. Self-reflection may boost your confidence and prepare you to face challenges fearlessly. While your courage will be evident, exercise patience with financial business decisions. Lovebirds will enjoy harmonious time together.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21
It's a promising day with high enthusiasm—be sure to channel it wisely. Self-assessment may improve your confidence and social image. Your communication skills will help resolve challenges. Investors should avoid speculation. Higher education plans could gain traction.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23
Business plans may move forward successfully, with strong support from subordinates. Social or family gatherings will expand your network. A short business trip could offer valuable opportunities.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23
A financially positive day. Gains from past investments and better expense management will improve your savings. Lovebirds should stay gentle in conversations to maintain harmony. Stability and progress are highlighted.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23
Family or sibling-related matters may take priority. A new venture with sibling or network support could be in the works. An order may uplift your family business. Small but smart efforts could bring gains, thanks to your strong network.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22
You may struggle with negative thoughts and impatience. Arrogance could block clear decision-making. Life may seem stagnant today. Seek elders' blessings for guidance. Avoid risky investments, and lovebirds should steer clear of unnecessary arguments.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22
Focus might be lacking in the morning, but with elders' support, clarity will return. Important projects will progress, and financial recovery is possible—previous losses may turn into gains, boosting overall well-being.

Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22
A large order from a new client could improve business liquidity. An influential figure may help accelerate your growth. Your relationship with your boss may improve, potentially leading to a promotion. Your prestige and reputation are set to rise.

Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20
Elders' blessings bring peace and patience. You may feel content and calm. A spiritual journey or charitable act could be part of your day. Overseas travel is also a possibility.

Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19
There may be a disconnect between work and home life. Avoid ego clashes in relationships to preserve emotional balance. Issues in partnerships could begin to resolve. Singles should not rush into marriage. Patience is crucial for navigating difficulties.

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20
You may experience low energy and minor health issues, disrupting your routine. Emotional sensitivity or irrational fears could affect your mindset. Avoid risky activities. Turning to spiritual practices—such as prayer, chanting, or visiting a temple—may bring peace and comfort.

KIDZONE

Raina, 8 years, Bengaluru

Ashwin T, St, John's High School

Kidzone, Bangalore Mirror, No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru-560 011;
Please send hard copies of your artwork in A4 size only.

SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M
196/4÷7/2
49÷7/2 = 7÷1/2 = 14

QUOTE UNCODE
It is more important to know where you are going than to get there quickly.

STRIKE OUT

V	E	R	B	A	L		O	U	N	C	E	S		
E		E		R	I	A	L	S		A		A		
N	U	N	C	E		D	E	C	E	I	T			
E		D		E	A	S	E	L		E		E		
K	A	R	A	T	E		H	E	N	M	A	N		
C		A		I		B	S	E	N		A	R		
K	E	B	A	B		O		E	E	R	I	E		
X		B	O	L	T	I	N	G		M		S		
R	E	R	A	N		C		N	A	M	E	S		
E	V	E	N		N	O	N		B	U	R	R		
E		D		H	I	D	E	S		C		Y		
D	I	S	A	R	M		E	L	U	D	E	D		

FAST FIVE

L	A	B	R	A
O	G	L	E	R
C	O	O	N	S
U	R	A	T	E
M	A	T	E	Y

RIDDLER
Working together they can stock a shelf at a rate of 1/20 + 1/30 (or 5/60) per minute. They'll finish in 12 minutes

MENSA PUZZLE
Working from top to bottom, letters appear in alphabetical order, skipping any letters written with only straight lines.
ached, adder, arced, arched, cadre, card, carded, cared, cedar, chard, CHEDAR, dare, dared, dead, dear, dread, hard, head, heard, herd, raced, read

BULL'S EYE

C	A	V	E	I	N		N	E	E	D	E	D		
A		E		N										
V		I		E										
E		N		I										
A	D	L	I	B	B	E	D		A	S	A	N		
N		W		O		A				A		O		
M	I	D		T	R	I	B	U	T	E		I		
A		L		S		N			R			H		
H	U	R	R	A	H		E	J	E	C	T	S		
G		O		E				A				E		
I		W	I	L	L	I	A	M		D	E	F		
N		C		L		I		A		G				
N	E	S	T		I	R	R	I	T	A	N	T		
U		I		K		Y		T		I				

QUICK

C	A	D	E	T	S		S	H	A	B	B	Y		
U		I		K		Y		T		I				
N	E	S	T		I	R	R	I	T	A	N	T		
N		C		L		I		A		G				
I		W	I	L	L	I	A	M		D	E	F		
G		O		E				A				E		
H	U	R	R	A	H		E	J	E	C	T	S		
A		L		S		N			R			H		
M	I	D		T	R	I	B	U	T	E		I		
N		O		A						A		O		
A	D	L	I	B	B	E	D		A	S	A	N		
C		A		I		B	S	E	N		A	R		
K	E	B	A	B		O		E	E	R	I	E		
I	D	O	L		A	R	T		L	O	T	A		
E		D		E	A	S	E	L		E		E		
K	A	R	A	T	E		H	E	N	M	A	N		

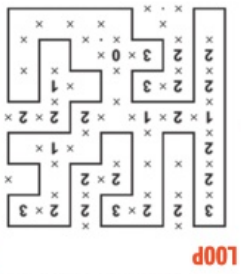
SUDOKU

4	9	3	5	6	1	7	2	8
7	2	6	4	9	8	5	1	3
1	5	8	3	7	2	9	4	6
2	8	5	7	4	9	3	6	1
6	3	4	1	8	5	2	9	7
9	7	1	6	2	3	8	5	4
8	4	9	2	1	7	6	3	5
3	1	2	8	5	6	4	7	9
5	6	7	9	3	4	1	8	2

ALPHA TRIANGLE
D, Id, Rid, Grid, Dirge, Glider, Griddle.

GO FIGURE
Easy
5 + 8 – 7 + 4 = 10
Medium
7 + 5 – 2 + 1 = 9
Hard
6 – 5 – 2 + 3 = 2

LOOP



KAKURO

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Bengalureans turn explorers this summer

As summer sets in with its sweltering heat, Bengalureans are packing their bags and heading out to cooler, greener, and more exotic destinations. From serene hill stations in the Western Ghats to cultural escapes in Europe and beach getaways in Southeast Asia, travel agencies are witnessing a massive surge in summer travel bookings. This year, the travel trends clearly show that people are looking beyond traditional options, opting for immersive and experience-based holidays — both within India and abroad.

Domestic travel on the rise

Within India, places like Wayanad, Kodagu, Chikkamagaluru, Ooty, and Munnar continue to be the top picks for Bengalureans looking for a short break. Resorts in these locations are nearly sold out for weekends and even mid-week stays are filling up fast. "Families are preferring to drive down to nearby destinations for 3-5 days. Homestays and boutique resorts that offer private experiences and nature trails are especially popular," said Arun Prasad, a travel consultant. "People are also opting for cooler locations like Shimla, Manali, Kashmir and Leh-Ladakh for longer holidays."

Interstate getaways: Wellness and heritage retreats

Apart from leisure, many Bengalureans are now travelling for wellness and heritage. Kerala's Ayurvedic resorts, Rishikesh's yoga retreats, and heritage haveli stays in Rajasthan are witnessing strong interest. "Post-pandemic, the idea of travel has shifted. It's not just about sightseeing anymore. People are choosing experiences that relax the mind and body," shared Neelima Bhat, founder of a boutique travel service. "We've curated trips for solo women travellers to Uttarakhand and for retired couples exploring Sikkim and the Northeast."

International travel boom

What's remarkable this summer is the surge in international travel. After a lull during the pandemic years, passport stamps are back in style. Travel to Southeast Asian countries like Thailand, Vietnam, Singapore, and Bali is booming thanks to short flights and relatively affordable packages. Europe, too, is high on the list with Italy, Switzerland, France, and Spain being the most favoured.

"Summer travel has shot up by nearly 40% compared to last year," said Vikram Rao, a travel agent. "Bhutan and Maldives are trending for couples, especially honeymooners, while families are choosing European coach tours or theme park vacations in Dubai and Singapore. We've even had corporate groups booking luxury cruises to Norway!"

Techies and remote workers take advantage

With hybrid work still in place in many companies, Bengaluru's large IT and startup community is taking advantage by blending work with leisure. Many techies are opting for "workcations" — working out of mountain lodges in Himachal, beach cottages in Goa, or even villas in Sri Lanka and Bali. "Being in tech, my work hours are flexible. So, I've planned a two-week workcation in Ubud, Bali," said Shruthi Hegde, a software engineer at a fintech firm. "It allows me to balance work and relaxation. Plus, I finally get to try yoga in its natural setting!"

Gen Z and Instagram influence

Social media has also influenced summer travel trends, especially among Gen Z. Instagram-worthy locations, adventure activities, and curated experiences like hot-air balloon rides in Cappadocia or Northern Lights tours in Scandinavia are increasingly popular. "I saved up for months for this trip to Turkey and Greece," said Tarun R, a 24-year-old content creator from JP Nagar. "It's not just about going; it's about capturing the moment, sharing the story, and living it big."

Eco-conscious travel grows

Interestingly, many Bengalureans are also becoming more eco-conscious. Sustainable stays, local experiences, and ethical tourism are slowly gaining traction. Tour companies are now promoting carbon offsets, eco-resorts, and trips that benefit local communities. As temperatures soar and wanderlust takes over, one thing is certain — Bengalureans are on the move, eager to escape the heat and embrace adventure.